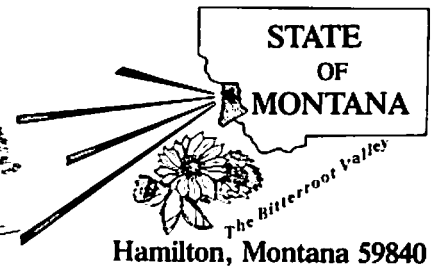
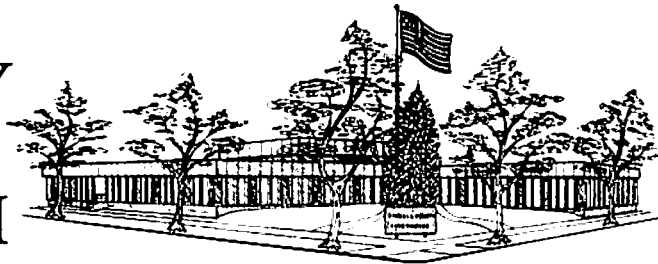


COUNTY OF RAVALLI



**Ravalli County Commissioners
215 South 4th Street, Suite A
Hamilton, MT 59840
406-375-6500**

December 19, 2008

U.S. Representative Dennis Rehberg
Helena District Office
950 North Montana Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

U.S. Senator Max Baucus
Empire Block
30 West 14th Street
Suite 206
Helena, MT 59601

U.S. Senator Jon Tester
Capital One Center
208 N. Montana Avenue, Suite 202
Helena, MT 59601

In August of 2003 Sapphire Community Health, Inc. (Sapphire) received from the Bureau of Primary Health Care (Health Resources and Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services) a letter stating Sapphire had been recommended for funding under the New Access Points grant program. Subsequent to that letter, funds were transferred from the Bureau of Primary Health Care in order to address the needs of a national disaster. This transfer of funds decreased the number of Community Health Centers (CHC) that could be funded by the Bureau of Primary Health Care. Sapphire was informed that it would have to again apply during the national competitive grant cycle for funding. Sapphire competed twice more; once the grant application was lost, and once the grant application did not score high enough to be funded.

During the previous applications for funding under the New Access Points grant program, Sapphire CHC submitted support letters from local businesses, individual citizens, non-profit organizations, state legislators, local mayors and town council

members, the management of Marcus Daly Hospital, area physicians, the Ravalli County Health Board, and the Ravalli County Commissioners. Given this broad range of support, we believe a community health center will be a welcome provider.

A Community Health Center is needed in Ravalli County. There are many people in Ravalli County who are in desperate need of access to primary health care. Of the 40,582 people who reside in the county, 15,827 (39%) have incomes under 200% of poverty (Census Update 2006). Additionally, 7,183 (17.7%) of the county population is uninsured (Census 2000, Small Area Health Estimate).

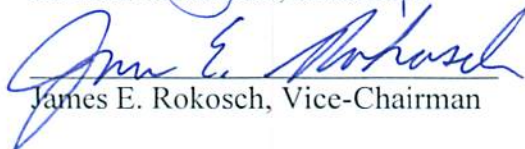
On behalf of Ravalli County we ask you to press for inclusion in the upcoming recovery plan, being discussed by the Congressional Leadership and President-Elect Barack Obama, funding for those communities that have been recommended for funding but subsequently were not funded because federal funds were transferred from the Bureau of Primary Health Care.

Should funding for community health centers not be included in the upcoming recovery plan, we ask you to direct the Health Resources and Services Administration to fund Sapphire Community Health and other similarly situated New Access Points applicants.

We appreciate your attention to our request and look forward to working with you on behalf of the residents of Ravalli County.

Sincerely,


Carlotta Grandstaff, Chairman


James E. Rokosch, Vice-Chairman


Greg Chilcott, Member


Kathleen Driscoll, Member